EPR news

FOR PARTNERS IN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT IN ALBERTA

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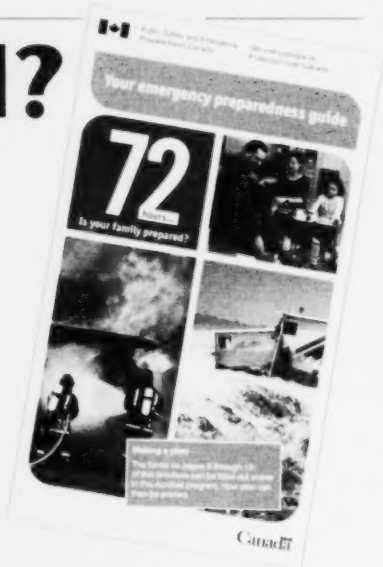
Emergency Preparedness Week – May 6-12, 2007

Are you prepared?



With the ever-increasing reports of disasters around the world, more and more Canadians are realizing the importance of taking steps to prepare for emergencies. From storing food and water to creating emergency kits and escape plans, everyone can do things to lessen their risk.

In 1995, the federal, provincial and territorial governments started working together to develop informational materials and activities to help individuals. The first Emergency Preparedness Week was held in 1996. Since then more and more information has been created and posted on websites to help people increase their knowledge about steps they can take. The federal government has also created an emergency preparedness guide that helps families get prepared for the first 72 hours of a disaster event.

Entitled *72 hours… Is Your Family Prepared?*, the document is available on the Government of Canada website: www.gov.ca.

For a copy of the guide and other information and activities, visit www.epweek.ca. Additional information is also available at the following websites:

Environment Canada – **www.weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca**

Safe Canada – **www.safecanada.ca**

Canadian Red Cross – **www.redcross.ca**

St. John Ambulance – **www.sja.ca**

Salvation Army – **www.SalvationArmy.ca**.

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Putting your kit together

According to the Government of Canada's guide, the following are the basic items individuals will need to survive for 72 hours:

- Water – at least two litres of water per person per day (Include small bottles that can be carried easily in case of an evacuation order)
- Food that won't spoil, such as canned food, energy bars and dried foods (remember to replace the food and water once a year)
- Manual can opener
- Flashlight and batteries
- Candles and matches or lighter (remember to place candles in sturdy containers and to put them out before going to sleep)
- Battery-powered or wind-up radio (and extra batteries)
- First aid kit
- Special items such as prescription medications, infant formula and equipment for people with disabilities
- Extra keys for your car and house
- Cash in smaller bills, such as $10 bills (travellers cheques are also useful) and change for pay-phones
- A copy of your emergency plan including contact information

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Alberta

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BACK ISSUES OF THIS PUBLICATION CAN BE FOUND AT:
WWW.MUNICIPALAFFAIRS.GOV.AB.CA/FCO_FIRENEWS.HTM

Alberta

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Recommended additional kit supplies include the following:

- A change of clothing and footwear for each household member
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each household member
- A whistle (in case you need to attract attention)
- Garbage bags for personal sanitation
- Toilet paper and other personal care supplies
- Safety gloves
- Basic tools (hammer, pliers, wrench, screwdrivers, fasteners, work gloves)
- Small fuel-driven stove and fuel (follow manufacturer's directions and store properly)
- Two additional litres of water per person per day for cooking and cleaning

Source: Government of Canada website

Small Business Considerations

While most large corporations have plans in place in the event of a major crisis, small business owners are much more vulnerable than a larger organization. In addition to a smaller pool of resources, small businesses often don't develop contingency plans. As a result, they are not prepared for how they would carry on during or after a major incident. The Government of Alberta has created templates that can be used wholly or partially, depending on the requirements of the user's plan. The text and layout of the templates are based on the eight-section structure of a business continuity plan, in accordance with Part 2 of the Government of Alberta's Business Continuity Guide. For a copy of the template visit: www.municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/ema_Templates.htm

Additional information is also available through the Government of Canada website at http://publicsafety.gc.ca/prg/em/gds/bcp-en.asp

Resources (in the Alberta Government Library – Labour Building)

Emergency Preparedness/Incident Prevention/Crisis Management video (14 min)

Ensure employee safety in an emergency by following this program's guidelines for developing an emergency plan. Shows what departments and facilities to contact for assistance; how to announce an emergency and conduct an evacuation; how to handle the media; and much more. Also explains the purpose and function of a Crisis Management Team and demonstrates a practice drill (FVC 250)

Highlights

From this issue...

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2008-03246/

Providing resources and tools

THE FIRE COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE (FCO) has a long history in Alberta, and I am fortunate to be carrying on that tradition. Over the years, many changes have taken place with the intent of providing better resources and tools for the fire service. For example, while the FCO has compiled and distributed a comprehensive yearly statistical report for several decades, a few years ago the format was expanded to create a more reader-friendly document that was easily shared and disseminated.

Training programs and workshops used to be offered for individual fire departments; however, to better utilize available resources and funding, these programs are now organized into geographical and regional response areas. With a desire to make training more affordable and accessible, this approach still provides the requested training, while allowing economies of scale, more flexibility in the timing for delivery and the opportunity to tailor specific programs to meet local needs.

As well, the format of the FCO's annual fire chiefs meeting was modified this past year to include perspectives from the various government departments and agencies that impact on and are impacted by the fire service. Similarly, the Government of Alberta's creation of the Alberta Emergency Management Agency combined two entities under one larger umbrella focused on emergency response and management. This arrangement makes a great deal of sense as we see the opportunity to better align resources and eliminate overlap while exploiting the synergies that better meet public safety needs. We also see similar actions taking place in many of our communities with the creation of more and more mutual aid agreements that include a much broader scope of emergency services that are now provided by fire departments.

Rick McCullough, Alberta Fire Commissioner

The FCO is here to help, by providing resources and tools needed by fire and emergency services.

The creation of the Fire Services Advisory Committee (FSAC) was another approach to stay in tune with the needs of the fire service and related organizations. FSAC activities have grown considerably as its members work towards the ultimate goal of establishing a unified framework for the fire service.

For your information, the FCO is looking at the merits of creating a Significant Incident Investigation Team. Led by the FCO, this team of subject matter experts would be assembled on those occasions where there is a significant incident involving a death, injury or large loss that may be related to a process, product or code failure. Through careful investigation and analysis, we would be better positioned to identify trends and issues, which will help all of us to be better prepared for future events.

The FCO is here to help, by providing resources and tools needed by fire and emergency services. Through *Alberta FIREnews* and other avenues of communication, such as our website and face-to-face meetings, we will continue to provide information and news about initiatives that are taking place in Alberta and beyond.

Putting a plan together

You can't read a newspaper or watch the T.V. news without some dire warning of possible threats. And one of those threats is the possibility of a pandemic in the not too distant future. But the good news is that numerous organizations have already been hard at work putting together plans to deal with a potential pandemic or other crisis.

A quick search of the Internet produced numerous web pages related to pandemic preparedness – for several cities and towns to almost every province in Canada as well as federally and on the international level (e.g. The World Health Organization).

Best of all, governments are taking the potential threats seriously and have already been putting together plans. Coalitions have been formed to include all the various departments and other organizations that need to be involved. The end result is well-coordinated plans and scenarios for a potential pandemic situation. And each year these plans are reviewed, sometimes put through a mock exercise and then updated or revised.

In Alberta, the provincial government has been hard at work putting together a cross-ministry strategy to deal with a pandemic situation. As reported in the Fall 2006 issue of *Alberta FIREnews*, Alberta Health and Wellness is the lead agency and Emergency Management Alberta provides coordination and support. The Deputy Ministers Pandemic Influenza Committee (DMPIC) oversees the Government of Alberta's cross-ministry work, and each ministry in the provincial government has a role. Other key players include the World Health Organization (WHO), Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada as well as municipalities and regional health authorities in Alberta. The draft Alberta Pandemic Influenza Operations Plan was presented to the DMPIC for review and then forwarded to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing vice-Committee for sign off.

Be prepared

Past experience, both in Alberta and around the world, has shown that an emergency or disaster can occur anywhere and at any time. To be prepared for an emergency or disaster, planning is critical to ensure that everyone involved knows what to do to respond effectively to the situation. From who should be notified to what resources are required and the roles of various organizations, the answers to these issues are clearly identified in emergency response plans. In Alberta, municipalities provide the first response to local emergencies and Emergency Management Alberta is there to help them if they request assistance. To be well prepared, EMA has developed a number of provincial emergency response plans to deal with potential incidents that may occur, including:

- Alberta Emergency Plan
- Support Plan for Catastrophic Earthquake in British Columbia
- Critical Pest Infestation Response Plan
- Foreign Animal Disease Eradication Support Plan
- Support Plan for Search and Rescue Operations
- Dangerous Goods Incident Plan
- Petroleum Industry Incident Support Plan

These emergency plans were developed as cooperative understandings between specific public and private sector agencies to ensure there is an effective response to disasters and major emergencies in Alberta. The plans are agreements between groups with mutual interests. Although they are not legislated, they usually derive their mandate from legislation.

For more information about the Government of Alberta's emergency plan, visit www.municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/ema_emerg_plans.htm

After that occurs, both the health plan and the operations plan will be posted to a government web site devoted strictly for pandemic influenza preparedness.

Emergency Management Alberta has also developed a guideline for government departments and agencies to create their own pandemic plan. Entitled the Government of Alberta Department Consequence Management Template Guide, it is available at www.municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/ema/docs/CM_Plan_Template_Jan_07.pdf

This plan provides a template for action that outlines how each department responds to the consequences of a disaster. Included in the plan is a description of department involvement to ensure the effective coordination of needed resources. The plan also establishes the policies, concepts and general protocols for implementing a standardized system for managing the consequences of a disaster.

"The Consequence Management Template Guide is an excellent starting point for any department or agency to create its own specific guidelines," said Doug Forge, Emergency Management Officer, Emergency Management Alberta Agency. "It is also beneficial for municipalities, and is intended to annex their municipal plan, which usually includes mutual aid agreements with neighbouring communities."

For more information about the Government of Alberta's emergency plans, please contact Doug Forge at (780) 422-0349 or visit the EMA website at www.municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/ema_index.htm

Multi-tasking gets the job done

With only 12 volunteer firefighters, who all work full-time with other jobs, New Norway Fire Chief Scott "The Patchman" Williams had an interesting challenge on his hands. How do you make sure your staff are familiar with the jurisdiction they protect, how can you identify major hazards in the county and how can you conduct a fundraising campaign with few resources. The answer… conduct a door-to-door campaign!

Williams says that his department was already planning to hand out initial response cards in order to conduct preplanning due diligence in the community. However, the announcement of a pilot of the Alberta Government's Emergency Farm Plan* provided the opportunity to combine the two tasks. Williams and his firefighters discussed the best approach and decided that a personal campaign to all residences in the county would enable them to get the information they needed. And, since they were planning to go door-to-door, why not include their fundraising campaign at the same time. This year's campaign was focused on selling "The Fire Within" calendars and despite New Norway not being a high call volume department, the campaign was quite successful. In fact, they sold 810 calendars, which raised $9,720.

When the firefighters first started going to the residences, they received some feedback about the local newspaper article on the Emergency Farm Plan. "A few of our residents didn't want the location of the farm plan tube accessible to someone other than emergency personnel," explained Williams. "In order to ensure their privacy, we revised the initial response cards so that they could indicate on the card where the farm plan tube would be located. It was a win/win for both sides."

Firefighters from the New Norway Fire Department canvass discuss the Emergency Farm Plan with a local area resident.

In addition to obtaining information from each resident through the response cards, the campaign also provided two other benefits. It enabled the teams of two firefighters at a time to become more familiar with the fire district/jurisdiction as well as have a look around the property and identify major hazards that exist in the county.

"The campaign was a huge commitment for our volunteer firefighters, requiring each of them to give up valuable Saturdays to take part in this important activity, "said Williams. "Yet every one of them readily accepted the task and did an admirable job. Thanks to their efforts, we now have a comprehensive data base that includes any potential hazards. As well, the majority of our residences now have a Farm Emergency Plan completed and available for our information in the event of a situation at their location."

New Norway Fire Department at a glance

Staff resources: 12 volunteer firefighters, including Fire Chief Scott Williams who has been chief for the past year, deputy chief for three years before that. Williams' experience includes 26 years of fire/EMS service, including working in oilfield firefighting, EMS full time and dispatch, with some out of province work. Staff complement includes 2 EMT firefighters and another who teaches industrial first aid.

Training: Training practices are held two times a month, plus the third Wednesday as an optional practice. The twice-monthly practices cover everything from basics and up, including the issue of water supply, which is a huge consideration in this mostly rural jurisdiction. As well, New Norway firefighters take training through the East Central Training Academy.

Jurisdiction: As the New Norway Fire Department has a contract with the county for fire protection, the department's jurisdiction includes both the village and the county of Camrose.

Equipment: 1997 GMC Engine, 1972 Tanker and 1979 One Ton Van

Calls: A mix of everything from medical calls to wild land and structure fires. The department also does traffic controls and is looking at providing extrication services.

The Patchman

If Scott "The Patchman" Williams sounds familiar, perhaps its because you've used his services. The Patchman is a Camrose/Edmonton-based company that provides emergency vehicle graphics on police, fire and ambulance units. The company also provides cresting, embroidery and screen printing for fire departments and emergency response organizations. As Williams says, "a lot of people don't remember my real name. They just call me The Patchman."

*An article on the Alberta Emergency Farm Plan was in the Winter 2006 issue of *Alberta FIREnews*.

Leduc County's successful program – Part I

CONTINUING WITH the focus on recruitment and retention, provided below is part one of a two-part article about Joan Meidinger, Coordinator of Volunteer Services for the Leduc County Fire Service, who has responsibility for establishing an ongoing recruitment and retention program for volunteer firefighters. In this issue we focus on the success of the county's recruitment program.

Back in 1998, Joan Meidinger was hired on a short-term basis to coordinate recruitment and retention of firefighters. By June 30, 2000, she was in a permanent full-time position responsible for planning and implementing changes that enhance the organized, structured essential components of the volunteer program.

In order to be successful, Meidinger says it was essential to learn about the unique individual she was to recruit. As a result, for the past nine years, she has been learning as much as she can about the fire service and about volunteer firefighters, including their expectations, the necessary commitment, long-term and short-term volunteers, what attracts volunteers to the fire service and what keeps them as well as the flip side – why they don't stay.

Much of the learning was through listening to people in the fire service – by conducting extensive interviews with every firefighter in the department plus alumni firefighters, fire service personnel from other departments, spouses of firefighters and employers of firefighters. "Slowly, I was able to get a good picture of what kind of person we needed to attract as a volunteer firefighter," says Meidinger. "Elements that need to be considered include gender, age, interest, skills, value, occupation, education, physical fitness level, attitude, community ties and time availability."

Prior to her involvement, the fire department used to recruit in February each year and bring on one group of firefighters each March to fill vacancies within the crews. The training was focused on training the new recruits. One of the first things Meidinger recognized was that the recruitment process needed standardization and direction, focusing on the recruits as well as training to higher levels for longer-term members.

"A fire department's greatest asset is its people, and there should be a balance between the needs of the organization and the needs of the volunteers," points out Meidinger. "Recruitment requires a formalized process that attracts quality people for a quality product. It is essential that a recruitment plan and process address tomorrow's needs, not just today's. The strategy must be piloted, implemented and evaluated regularly. It takes effort but it gets results."

A fire department's greatest asset is its people, and there should be a balance between the needs of the organization and the needs of the volunteers.

Because volunteer firefighters need to be available 24/7, Meidinger says it is important to sell the position to employers, pointing out what an employer has to gain by having an employee as a volunteer firefighter.

Meidinger also encourages fire departments to be proactive in recruiting – and retaining – firefighters rather than reactive. She suggests that a volunteer fire department enlist twice as many firefighters as required to respond to an emergency call. "It's the 50% rule and has been one that has proven itself and been adopted by many departments. Even with changing times, we are experiencing that this rule of thumb may not change."

According to Meidinger, the recruitment of volunteer firefighters is more challenging than ever with today's economic times. "Recruiters face many competing priorities and interests, with

Business and fire personnel co-mingle at an employer luncheon hosted by Leduc County Fire Services

family and work commitments being the main two. Society and lifestyles have changed and now the average length of service for a volunteer firefighter is four to five years, a big change from a time when volunteers served a tenure of 20 or so years," she notes.

Meidinger recommends developing a marketing plan to attract potential volunteers. "Look at how you communicate to the community and what are the best ways to get your message to the right target group of individuals. If your first effort doesn't work, then reassess and try again," advises Meidinger. "Ensure that your target group has the information it needs to make an informed decision."

As with most challenges, success comes with team work, says Meidinger and believes that everyone within the fire department is responsible for recruiting new members. "Although I may head up the recruitment campaign, the process involves our entire department, from our Chief to the communications person and every firefighter and fire-related personnel in between. Everyone has a buy-in, we recruit together and, let me tell you, the firefighters are the best ambassadors of the program."

Effective marketing methods

In Leduc County, recruitment efforts have been extensive and targeted, ongoing and regularly evaluated. To promote the fire department and recruit potential quality volunteers, a variety of marketing methods have been used, including the following:

- Posters, flyers and a recruitment handbook were designed to acquaint potential members as well as the community with the department. The recruitment handbook can be given out throughout the year to interested potential volunteers along with an application.
- Information packages were hand-delivered to some of the major companies in the area, which also provided the opportunity to answer any questions.
- Because employer support and peer pressure are essential in firefighter recruitment, an employer appreciation luncheon is held each year, which includes lunch, a tour of the station, certificates of appreciation and an expression of thanks from the County Reeve and Fire Chief.
- Include firefighters in recruitment campaigns, including a recruitment address given to all members about being a recruiter and they continue to be informed about recruitment and upcoming training programs.
- Invite potential volunteers down to a training night to meet members of the department.
- Keep in touch with potential volunteers, which ensures that they feel needed and enables you find out if they actually are interested.
- Recruitment blitz of the surrounding residential area with a team of volunteer firefighters and the Coordinator of Volunteers.
- In conjunction with Volunteer Recognition Week in April, a recruitment/promotion article is published in a local newspaper.
- Firefighters have been guests on television breakfast shows recognizing volunteers.
- Promotion and recruitment booth set up and staffed at Community Registration events.
- Recruitment flyers are sent out to county residents.
- Hold a "Show n' Shine" open house, including displays, booths, demonstrations, dunk tank and mascot.
- Place signage on the main roads in the community.

For more information about the Leduc County Fire Service recruitment efforts, contact Joan Meidinger at 955-7099.

CRTC approval for telephone database sharing

Fort Saskatchewan and Strathcona County cooperation yields big results

In case of an impending emergency, municipalities across Canada now have the ability to reach large numbers of people with telephone warnings or instructions, thanks to a joint initiative put forward by Strathcona County and the City of Fort Saskatchewan to the Canadian Radio and Television Corporation (CRTC).

Over the past three years, the two municipalities have collaborated to gain CRTC approval for emergency personnel to use residential telephone numbers (referred to as the E9-1-1 database) to launch mass call-outs in an emergency. While technology exists for call-outs to be made simultaneously to many numbers, until now privacy regulations prevented numbers in the E9-1-1 database from being used for this type of notification.

On February 28, 2007, the CRTC approved use of the E9-1-1 database for emergency notification provided there are appropriate measures in place to maintain privacy.

The Mayors of Fort Saskatchewan and Strathcona County say this decision gives municipalities a significant new tool to further enhance the safety of their communities. Telephone numbers in the E9-1-1 database are considered to be 99 per cent accurate.

Brian Parker, Fire Chief, City of Fort Saskatchewan and Fire Chief Dwight Osbaldeston, Strathcona County Emergency Services at the joint initiative CRTC announcement.

A number of details remain to be finalized between the CRTC, telephone companies and municipalities to formally allow municipalities access to the E9-1-1 information. It will then be up to individual municipalities to implement a notification system on a local basis.

For more information, contact the City of Fort Saskatchewan Fire Chief Brian Parker at 780-992-6268 or Strathcona County Fire Chief Dwight Osbaldeston at 467-5216.

Near-Miss Reporting System 2006 Annual Report now available

A near-miss event is defined as an unintentional unsafe occurrence that could have resulted in an injury, fatality or property damage. Only a fortunate break in the chain of events prevented an injury, fatality or damage.

The Near-Miss Reporting System

The National Fire Fighter Near-Miss Reporting System is a web-based tool for collecting and disseminating information on near-miss events involving firefighters. The system is funded by the U.S Department of Homeland Security's Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program and Fireman's Fund Insurance Company. The program is administered by the IAFC and endorsed by the International Association of Fire Fighters, the Volunteer & Combination Officers Section of the IAFC and several other fire service associations and organizations. It is free, voluntary, confidential, non-punitive and secure. It has three main goals:

- give firefighters the opportunity to learn from each other through real-life experiences,
- help formulate strategies to reduce firefighter injuries and fatalities, and
- enhance the safety culture of the fire service.

How does the program work?

Situations that qualify as near-misses are essentially in the eyes of the reporter. An event believed to be a near-miss is suitable for reporting by any member of the fire community. Visitors to www.firefighternearmiss.com may submit reports, search reports or access safety-related information. The online report submission takes about 10 to 15 minutes. There are drop-down questions and open text boxes to describe the event and the lessons learned. Once the report has been submitted, report reviewers (active-duty fire service professionals) analyze the report and de-identify it by removing all department names, individual names, company numbers, etc. The report is then posted on the web site for other firefighters to learn from. The purpose of the program is primarily data collection in a non-judgmental format. According to Amy Hultman, Project Manager of the reporting system, Canadian firefighters are also welcome to submit reports.

Near-miss reporting systems focus on identifying patterns that exemplify system problems. Once identified, strategies and practices can be developed to affect change. The aviation, military and medical industries credit the use of near-miss reporting systems as significant contributors to reducing errors, injuries and fatalities. The firefighter near-miss program is based on the Aviation Safety Reporting System (ASRS), which uses the information it gathers to address reported hazards, conduct research on operational safety problems and facilitate an understanding of aviation safety-related issues. ASRS also provides data on the quality of human performance. This function serves as the basis for further research and recommendations.

The 2006 Near-Miss Reporting System Annual Report

The first of its kind, the annual report summarizing findings from near-miss reports submitted during 2006 is now available online at: www.firefighternearmiss.com and www.iafc.org/nearmiss.

Working groups representing a cross-section of U.S. firefighters evaluated reports in four specific categories, using a modified version of the U.S. Navy's Human Factors Analysis and Classification System (HFACS). The HFACS evaluates an event based on four levels of individual and institutional performance: unsafe acts, preconditions to unsafe acts, unsafe supervision and organizational influences. By looking at the totality of the event, it is possible to assess and identify different points where actions lead to near-miss events. These actions include ingrained behaviours, practices, mindsets and traditions that have become the norm for fire departments. These prior practices may hold the key, as they have in other industries, to changing culture and reducing firefighter injury and fatality rates.

Highlights of the annual report findings include:

- The most frequently occurring contributing factors in near-miss reporting are situational awareness, human error and decision making. These three factors are also the underpinning components of crew resource management (CRM), which is the practice of effective use of all resources. (The guidebook "Crew Resource Management" is available for free at: www.iafc.org/downloads/CRM%20Manual.pdf)
- Over 80 per cent of all Near-misses are the result of errors or mistakes that occur within the rules and regulations. Rather than pointing the blame at the firefighters involved, it was recognized that it is the series of events leading up to the event that is the real "cause" of the event.
- Adverse mental states dominated the findings under "preconditions to unsafe acts." Analyzing a near-miss report of a crew directed to enter a rekindled fire that had been fought

defensively earlier in the shift, and a subsequent collapse that traps three firefighters, the report determined that personnel on the scene exhibited:

- loss of situational awareness (entering a heavily damaged, unstable structure);
- channelized attention (mount an interior attack because the building is on fire);
- distraction (overlooked structural damage because of the flames showing);
- misplaced motivation (we must put the fire out because we are the fire department);
- lack of sleep (the rekindle occurred at 0100 HRS); and
- haste/"get home-itis" (the faster we put this thing out, the sooner we get back to bed).

- Failures on the part of supervisors were found to be the most frequent cause in the unsafe supervision level. A lack of guidance, oversight and failure to correct inappropriate/unsafe behaviors were the leading selections in this category.
- Under the category of Organizational Climate, inadequate/inferior chains of command were cited, recklessly aggressive cultures existed and risk-management programs were not in place.
- Collectively, there appears to be a call for fire departments to adopt an error-management approach to improving firefighter performance.

For more information, please contact:
National Fire Fighter Near-Miss Reporting System
4025 Fair Ridge Drive
Fairfax, VA 22033
Phone: 703/537-4848
Fax: 703/273-0920
E-mail: nearmiss@iafc.org
Web site: www.firefighternearmiss.com

Report of the Week

Each week, report reviewers select one report, provide a brief analysis and commentary, then provide five follow-up questions. This report is a free program benefit that is e-mailed upon request. To receive, e-mail nearmiss@iafc.org and type "subscribe AR06" in the subject line.

Article developed with permission from: FireRescue Magazine, February 2007 issue (Elsevier Inc.)

Resources

Too Close For Comfort: Near-Miss Reporting video (13 min)

Near-miss incidents are useful predictors of potential accidents. Proper reporting and investigation of Near-miss incidents can reduce the number of accidents, when organizations act on recommendations from Near-miss incident investigations (VC 0360).

FSAC update

Momentum maintained during leadership changes

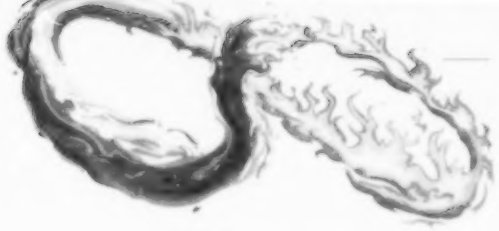
Following in the footsteps of the past Chairs, Pat Graham and Spence Sample, the new Fire Commissioner of Alberta, Rick McCullough, was welcomed as the new Chair of the Fire Services Advisory Committee (FSAC) at its February 2007 general meeting. McCullough now takes the reins to break the necessary trails toward a more unified fire service in Alberta.

Due to organizational changes within Municipal Affairs and Housing (MA&H), the Fire Commissioner's Office recently became part of the newly formed Alberta Emergency Management Agency (AEMA). The Acting Director of AEMA, Mark Egener, indicated he is very interested and keen on the work of the FSAC and will act as the ministry liaison with the Honourable Ray Danyluk, Minister of Alberta Municipal Affairs and Housing.

The four FSAC working groups have continued to be very active to better understand needs and to assemble options for consideration in the areas of risk assessment and community capacity; skills, competencies and leadership; technical standards; and public education and prevention. The first of a series of focus group sessions was held in mid January and FSAC wishes to express its appreciation for the excellent attendance and participation by a wide range of fire service stakeholders who kindly donated their time and expertise. The FSAC members agree that it is by working together with all stakeholders throughout the province that the committee will achieve its goal of providing recommendations for a unified framework for the fire service that appropriately addresses the needs of all Albertans, municipalities and fire services.

Updates about FSAC activities will continue to be provided through *Alberta FIREnews* and the FSAC website at www.fsacalberta.ca.

Focus remains on quality training



fire etc.

Offering top quality training hasn't changed, even though **fire etc.**'s organizational structure has changed many times over the years.

"Officially, we are the emergency training centre of Lakeland College," explained Chris Senaratne. "Current and future municipal fire service needs will always be **fire etc.**'s main focus even as we've become a school of Lakeland College.

Senaratne, who has been at **fire etc.** for 16 years, now has the title of Dean and reports to Lakeland's Vice President, Academics. Lakeland is a board-governed public college and has been just across the street from "the fire school" since its doors opened.

"Glenn Charlesworth, our president, Doug Elliott, our board chair, and the entire board have been extremely supportive of **fire etc.** Last year the board backed the need for new fire trucks received and we are now moving ahead with upgrades to our infrastructure," added Senaratne.

From instructors to administrative and support personnel, every staff member at **fire etc.** is dedicated to one common goal – working together to meet customer needs. Staff work in one of five areas:

- training services
- technical services
- course development
- distance learning
- business development and marketing

Brunetta Mariani serves as the manager of both the distance learning and the business development and marketing areas. Lois Shanahan is the coordinator and Trudy Maddex and Charlene McFarlane are assistants in the distance learning area. In the business development and marketing area, Ed Kohel and Kerri Lawrence are coordinators, and Crystal Arnold Swanson and Charmin Pashukla are assistants.

"We remain committed to making our training available to you whether here or at your site. Our team is always ready to find the best way to meet your needs," notes Mariani.

The 2007 **fire etc.** training calendar is available on-line at www.fire-etc.ca. For your copy, or for information about how **fire etc.** can help with your training needs, call Business Development toll-free at 1-888-863-2387.

We remain committed to making our training available to you whether here or at your site. Our team is always ready to find the best way to meet your needs.

Live ready – fire etc.'s emergency preparedness courses

You need to know that everyone on your team can perform under pressure if there's an emergency. Whether you're in a municipal, industrial or institutional setting, **fire etc.** has emergency preparedness training that will make you "live ready" for whatever may come.

"Our intensive training is filled with realistic scenarios and interactive exercises that will get your adrenaline pumping. Its integrated approach is designed to ensure seamless interagency response without fail," says Brunetta Mariani, Business Development and Marketing Manager.

Courses are designed for a wide range of people who are likely to be involved in an emergency situation. This includes first responders such as fire, police and emergency medical workers as well as those in public works, social services, health care, government and non-government agencies, security, elected officials and administration.

"**fire etc.** can also provide advice for large public events and validate your organization's emergency response plan by going through exercises and evaluation," notes Mariani.

A complete list of **fire etc.**'s emergency preparedness courses and alternative delivery options, including on-line and at your site, is available at www.fire-etc.ca.

Working to support Alberta injury control stakeholders

by Patti Stark, ACICR, Information & Communications Coordinator

THE TERM INJURY ENCOMPASSES a variety of situations in which people are hurt or killed. Injuries can be unintentional or intentional. Unintentional injuries result from incidents such as motor vehicle collisions, falls, fires, drowning and poisoning. Intentional injuries result from incidents such as suicide, assault, family violence and homicide.

Injuries are the leading cause of death for Albertans aged 1 to 44 years and cost the Alberta economy more than $1.8 billion every year. Injuries rank among the most serious health challenges that Alberta faces. In fact, Alberta has one of the highest injury rates in Canada. In 2003, 1,556 Albertans died as a result of injuries. Between 1994 and 2003, for every injury that resulted in death, there were 36 hospitalizations and 284 emergency department visits for injuries.

Since 1998, the Alberta Centre for Injury Control & Research (ACICR) has collaborated with stakeholders to reduce the frequency, severity and impact of injuries across the province. Significant milestones towards injury prevention have been achieved including a 25 per cent reduction in injury death rates from 1986 to 2003, an increase in the number of Albertans who consider injuries to be a serious health issue and interest in and implementation of new injury prevention and control initiatives in the province continues to rise.

The ACICR is located within the School of Public Health at the University of Alberta. The ACICR provides leadership, initiative, coordination and support for injury-related policies, programming, education, information services, research and surveillance across Alberta so that injury control stakeholders can fulfill their mandates of injury control.

The Alberta Injury Control Strategy was developed by a broad range of stakeholders brought together by ACICR to provide a provincial framework for guiding and implementing injury control initiatives in Alberta. The Alberta Injury Control Alliance (AICA) was formed in December 2005 to tackle the injury issue in a coordinated way by organizations, businesses, industries, communities and other stakeholder groups and individuals who support the mission, goals and objectives defined in the strategy. The Alliance, with secretariat support from ACICR, continues to seek provincial government buy-in and support for the strategy.

Addressing motor vehicle-related injuries is a key priority for ACICR and for many other injury control stakeholders. In 2006, Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation released the *Alberta Traffic Safety Plan: Saving Lives on Alberta's Roads*, the culmination of efforts of 35 traffic safety stakeholders to build a strategy to deal with this problem. The plan sets a number of ambitious goals including a 30 per cent decrease in the average number of road users who are seriously injured or killed during 2008-2010 compared to average numbers from 1996-2001.

Critical to the success of the plan is community-based coordination and delivery of initiatives, programs and awareness activities. With funding from Alberta Health and Wellness and Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation, ACICR will facilitate the development of 16 regional traffic safety coordinator positions across the province. These coordinators will develop local traffic safety committees, identify local traffic safety issues and link with provincial initiatives. Drawing on best practices this unified, coordinated approach has the potential to significantly reduce motor vehicle-related deaths and injuries on Alberta roadways.

In summary, the ACICR assists public health professionals, law enforcement agencies, educators, fire departments, emergency medical services personnel and other local stakeholders to prevent injuries in their communities by:

- making injury information and data readily available
- connecting people and organizations
- increasing the knowledge of practitioners regarding best practices to inform development of injury prevention programs and strategies
- offering grant funding for community injury prevention projects
- advocating for public policy in injury control
- providing workshops and conferences for professional development and education
- supporting, conducting and evaluating injury control research , and
- working with stakeholders in their communities to address their needs.

For more information on ACICR, see www.med.ualberta.ca/acicr or call (780) 492-6019.

Resources

Driven to Distraction video (10 min)

Produced by the Canada Safety Council, this 10-minute video teaches the complexities of driving, three major categories of distractions – environmental, situational and psychological – and how to handle them in a safe and responsible manner to minimize the risk of collisions and other incidents. Throughout, the importance of paying attention to the primary task of driving is emphasized (FVC 277).

A personal perspective

Chad Sartison, a volunteer firefighter with the Priddis Fire Department, and the creator and Chair of ***The Fire Within*** *calendar, provides a personal perspective on two issues near and dear to volunteer firefighters and their fire departments.*

In a relentlessly evolving modern-day fire service, preparing your department for the future can be a daunting task. In my travels across Alberta and Canada, the two main challenges that consistently come to the forefront are volunteer recruitment and funding.

Across Canada, a volunteer firefighter's service averages five years. Simply put, volunteer shortage is a national problem. There is no doubt that the satisfaction derived from helping your community more than makes up for the demands of the job. However, interruptions in lifestyle and time away from your family inevitably have a significant impact on recruitment. In addition to this, many volunteer firefighters are expected to spend a considerable amount of time raising funds to help acquire specialized equipment for their department, placing even more pressure on the volunteer.

Yet in spite of the risk of injury, liability issues and precious time away from our families, the volunteer fire service continues to survive. Clearly, the demands of our modern day lifestyles are not going to change. So how can a modern-day fire department prepare for the challenges that the future presents?

The answers to funding and recruitment come from one source and one source only – our communities. A historically humble and quiet fire service must evolve into an instrument that can more effectively promote itself to the communities we operate in. Perception is reality. Make no mistake; our budgets, our donations and our volunteers are a direct result of public awareness.

It is through this awareness that I have had the pleasure of watching *The Fire Within* volunteer firefighter calendar evolve in three short years from a fledgling idea that barely broke even to a powerhouse fundraiser. With the generous help of EnCana Corporation and others, *The Fire Within* has attracted over $500,000 in corporate sponsorship, raised over $372,000 net in public donations, and this year will involve over 80 departments in two provinces.

Through public awareness, in this case ignited by *The Fire Within*, the fire departments involved with the calendar have begun to address issues like funding and recruitment. And, as long as they continue to deliver a clear and consistent message to the public they serve, they will continue to reap the benefits of a modern day evolving fire service for years to come.

A fundraising initiative

Stemming from a motorist's remark during a roadblock on Highway 22 as volunteer firefighters attended the scene of a collision, *The Fire Within* calendar has evolved into a truly spectacular fundraising initiative for participating fire departments in Alberta and B.C.

In just a couple of years, the participation has grown from six fire departments in southern Alberta to 80 throughout Alberta and areas of B.C. In addition, Chad Sartison, creator and Chair of *The Fire Within* has also been successful in raising awareness and sponsorship for the initiative. Provided below is a quick update on *The Fire Within* success to date.

- In 2006, EnCana not only donated $100,000 to *The Fire Within* but through its EnCana Match Campaign wrote over $60,000 of additional cheques directly to volunteer fire departments in Alberta participating in the project, proving Alberta's corporations do indeed care.
- In 2006, fire departments raised over $240,000 and 100 per cent of the money stayed in the community where it was raised.

For more information or to get involved with the *2008 The Fire Within* calendar, please contact Chad Sartison before August 2007.

Phone: 1-866-HERO-911, email: chad@thefirewithin.ca

Making progress on several fronts

The Alberta Fire Chiefs Association (AFCA) Diamond Anniversary Conference is scheduled for June 10-13, 2007 at the Mayfield Inn and Conference Centre in Edmonton, Alberta. This conference and trade show is shaping up to be one of our best ever. As of March 12, there were 56 apparatus registered for the Trade Show and the slate of speakers and topics is exceptional.

For the second year, AFCA President Brian McEvoy will be hosting the round table forum during the Monday morning business session. This forum is an open opportunity for all members to bring forward any items or subjects they have or want to be discussed by the membership. Last year's forum gave rise to a number of issues that the Board and the executive have been dealing with. Because the forum is open to all members, there was also the opportunity for dialogue between government officials, **fire etc.** and all the members.

At last year's conference, two resolutions were passed. The first resolution on fireworks generated a lot of work for the Board. We have worked with Alberta Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Fire Technical Council of the Safety Codes Council on this resolution and are currently waiting for the release of a public consultation on the status of low-hazard fireworks in Alberta. This consultation process has been developed by Safety Services Division

of Alberta Municipal Affairs and Housing and is awaiting final approval before commencement.

The second resolution on radio systems did not garner a response from the federal government; however, the department of the Alberta Solicitor General has an initiative in place for the development of the Alberta First Responders Radio System, which is a province-wide system that will be accessible for all first responders. The AFCA's interest in radio communications has made us a player in the development of this system. We have met with the Solicitor General, Fred Lindsey, to discuss this system and the impacts on the Alberta Fire Service. As a result, First Vice-President Brian Cornforth is a member of the Governance Committee which is responsible for developing a governance model for this system. Chief Cornforth will provide an update on this system at the conference in June.

A third resolution, which was not passed at the conference, spawned a committee, which was responsible for compiling survey results on the services provided by **fire etc.** The committee met with the President of Lakeland College, the Chairman of the Board of Lakeland College and the Dean of **fire etc.** to discuss concerns of the fire service. In addition to reaffirming their commitment to us as the main customer for **fire etc.**, Lakeland College has committed to the development of an advisory group that will deal specifically with the NFPA 1001 courses and the distance-learning program. This is a great opportunity for us to work directly with Lakeland College on re-establishing fire service training in Alberta as a program to be envied around the world.

Our new website (www.afca.ab.ca) went live on March 12, 2007. This is a major step forward as it includes more member services as well as an on-line bookstore for purchasing training material. The new site will also become a repository for electronic documents that can be used by fire services in Alberta. The first of these will be the model safety program and permit application forms we negotiated with Alberta Transportation for fire service compliance with the commercial carrier regulations. Watch for more to follow.

The work that we have accomplished has been driven by resolutions from our past conferences. For us to continue this work we need to see good resolutions for 2007. Any member wanting to put forward a resolution please contact Executive Director Bill Purdy at (780) 719-7939.

Aboriginal perspective

Working together for greater results

Activity continues to be strong in Alberta's rural northeast fire communities, according to Tom Klein, Rural Fire and EMS Coordinator for the Municipality of Wood Buffalo Regional Municipal Services. "Statistics for the regional emergency service show an increase in rural calls of 18.5 per cent from 2004 to 2005 and 22.5 per cent from 2005 to 2006, plus a projected 20 per cent increase anticipated right through to 2010. That means a jump from 599 calls in 2004 to 1836 calls in 2010, for an overall increase of 306.5 per cent in seven years," said Klein, who explained that this increase is due to more activity expected in the oil and gas industry as well as medical, motor vehicle collisions and fire calls.

Klein started in the position two years ago, with responsibility to provide assistance to the six rural fire departments around the Fort McMurray area – Anzac, Conklin, Fort Chipewyan, Fort McKay, Janvier and Saprae Creek.

Based on recent activity, the six fire departments are all doing well:

- The Anzac and Conklin fire departments had their first hands-on training with their new pumper in March and found that pumping water with the new units is easier than with the front mounts. The foam pro is also new to the rural departments.
- Four rural communities also took advantage of a Basic Emergency Preparedness course conducted by Emergency Management Alberta in March. The course enabled firefighters from Anzac, Janvier, Conklin and Fort Chipewyan to learn how to manage a disaster in their own community.
- Saprae Creek recently received their new SCBA. Most of the rural departments are now the proud owners of at least four new breathing apparatus that can be used for building entries. The new equipment will enhance firefighter safety on the fire ground.

In other news, the Métis Settlement Fire Chiefs have been active too:

- Métis Settlement Fire Chiefs are hosting a conference on May 23 and 24, 2007 in Gift Lake.
- Métis Settlement Fire Chiefs also held a Leadership Circle Workshop in Edmonton on February 7th that was hosted by the Fire Commissioner's Office. Métis Fire Chiefs and Métis Settlement Council were invited and the workshop went very well. Fishing Lake hired the workshop facilitator for another session that was held in Fishing Lake in March.
- The Métis Nations of Alberta is forming a training agreement with Edmonton Fire Rescue that would fund Métis individuals for firefighter training.
- As well, the Blood Tribe First Nations career councillor took a tour of the Edmonton Fire Rescue training facilities on March 29, 2007.

For more information about activities in Aboriginal communities, contact Judy Harvey, Fire Safety Officer with the Alberta Fire Commissioner's Office. Judy can be reached at 644-5031 or by email at judy.harvie@gov.ab.ca

Parade season prep

Reproduced with permission from VFIS

Everyone in the community and in the emergency services enjoys being involved in spring and summer parades. It's a great time for the emergency service organizations to show off its apparatus, equipment and personnel to the public. The impression made by participating in the parade can have a lasting effect on how your community receives your request for help in the future.

Getting ready for the parade entails more than just cleaning and shining the apparatus and having the parade uniforms cleaned and pressed. Let's look at some ideas that should be considered by your organization. These guidelines will help ensure that your resources, as well as the public's, are protected.

Do you have a contingency plan in place? Your organization will have an important piece of equipment plus personnel resources away from your community for an extended period of time. How will the organization compensate for those resources in the event of an emergency in your community?

Consider some of these guidelines:

- Never leave your community with inadequate equipment or resources to respond to the average emergency incident in your community.
- Take the apparatus that will be attending the parade out of service.
- Have a stand-by crew scheduled or available to respond to an emergency in your community while the apparatus is out of service.

Below are suggestions for the parade season. Remember, have fun, be proud of your equipment and organization and make a good impression on your public.

Personnel Safety Guidelines:

- No personnel should ever be allowed to ride on the back of the apparatus or on the hose bed before, during or after the parade. All personnel should be seated and belted during these times.
- If alcoholic refreshments will be available to the participants, after the parade, make sure you designate a qualified driver for the return trip.
- Do not allow any of the parade participants who have consumed alcohol to respond to an emergency.

Public Safety Guidelines:

- Have some of your personnel walk alongside of the apparatus during the parade to ensure that children and adults do not get too close.
- If handing out either candy or other items, have the personnel walking hand it out. Do not throw candy from the apparatus during the parade.
- If you must leave the parade to respond to an emergency, do it carefully and safely. Remember, the public is watching how you perform.

Alberta Government Library – Labour Building site

Fire protection audio-visual collection

THE FIRE COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE fire protection audio-visual collection is housed at the Labour Building Site library, one of a series of libraries run by the government. It is located at 3rd Floor, 10808 – 99 Avenue in Edmonton. The library's phone number is 780-427-8533, the fax number is 780-422-0084 and the Audio-Visual Services phone number is 780-427-4671. To call toll-free in Alberta, dial 310-0000 followed by the area code and phone number.

The audio-visual collection was established to promote fire safety awareness and to increase public understanding of issues and concerns related to fire safety. These materials and others are available for loan to any fire department, individual or workplace in Alberta.

New DVDs available

The following new fire protection DVDs have been added to the audio-visual library. Ordered from the Idea Bank, each DVD also includes a reference guide package.

- Manufactured Home Fire Safety
- In Their Own Words (for Grades 7-12)
- Assisted Living Facility Emergency Plan of Action Guide
- How to Select and Safely Use Portable Fire Extinguishers
- Public Assembly Fire Safety
- Fire in the Workplace

A number of other DVDs covering a wide range of fire protection and emergency management topics were purchased by the Fire Commissioner's Office in March 2007. These new titles will be posted in the fire protection audio-visual catalogue that is available online at www.hre.gov.ab.ca/cps/rde/xchg/hre/hs.xsl/1733.html

OH&S materials

To review the large selection of occupational health and safety information materials available through the Alberta government, go to www.employment.gov.ab.ca/library. To borrow materials, either contact your local library and make your requests through the inter-library loan system or visit the Alberta Government Library, located in Edmonton at the Labour Building site.

Digest

Message from the Acting Manager of EMA Agency

Effective January 29, 2007 Rick Brown was confirmed in the position of Executive Director, Emergency Management Alberta. The working title of this position will be Assistant Managing Director, Emergency Management. Rick has been acting in this position for over a year, and has done an outstanding job. Please join me in congratulating Rick on his promotion and thanking him for his untiring efforts on our behalf. Well done Rick B!

I also want to officially welcome Rick McCullough to the Agency as Alberta's new Fire Commissioner. His working title will be Assistant Managing Director, Fire Commissioner. Rick is a highly experienced and skilled fire professional who brings a wealth of knowledge to his position. Welcome Rick McC!

Mark Egener,
Acting Managing Director

Free Learn Not To Burn (French)

The Fire Commissioner's Office has a supply of Learn Not To Burn binders for Grades K to 3 in the French language. Please send an email to firecomm@gov.ab.ca indicating the number of copies the schools in your area can use and your contact information and mailing address to receive a shipment free of charge. Alternately, please call the FCO at (780) 427-8392 to place your order. For further information, please contact Assistant Fire Commissioner Mahendra Wijayasinghe at (780) 415-0546 or mahendra.wijayasinghe@gov.ab.ca

Hose Coupling 50th Anniversary Event

Plan now to attend the 50th Anniversary of the Provincial Hose Coupling Contest, which takes place August 4 & 5, 2007 in Picture Butte, Alberta. Only 20 teams can be accommodated this year, so register early. For more information or to register, contact:

Sharon Harvey
Emergency Services Admin. Officer
403.732.4100 C 403.394.9400
Sharon@picturebutte.ca

Sandy Cook
Hose Lay Committee
403.732.4519 C 403.394.5338
cooksa@shaw.ca

New fire hall announced for Lac Ste. Anne County

Through the Canada-Alberta Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (CAMRIF), the Government of Canada and the Alberta Government will each contribute $173,333 towards a new, larger, energy-efficient and sustainable fire hall in the Village of Sangudo. The new fire hall will improve safety for residences and businesses, as well as service Lac Ste. Anne County's growing population. The new 5,000 square foot, four-bay fire hall will enable the County fire department to meet the long-term needs of the community and provide more reliable services. The facility, which will be built to meet Silver LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards will also be less expensive to operate as a result of increased energy efficiency.

FCO changes

The Fire Commissioner's Office has recently undergone a few personnel changes, as indicated below:

- Spence Sample has been appointed Deputy Fire Commissioner
- Ken McMullen left the Fire Commissioner's Office to accept a position as Assistant Fire Chief, Prevention and Public Education, with the City of Airdrie Emergency Services
- Te-Jay Thompson left the FCO to accept a position with Alberta Health.

For the time being Ernie Polsom is the contact for the Calgary Region and Frank Harris, Tom O'Gorman and Kevan Jess will be assisting in covering the area. The FCO is recruiting for this position and anticipates having someone in place in the near future.

Mahendra Wijayasinghe, Assistant Fire Commissioner, Research & Programs, will cover Te-Jay's position until a replacement is hired.

2007 Summer Fire Safety Campaign

Fire hazards are an unavoidable part of our lives. One way to practice fire safety is to keep these hazards under control. The spring and summer months bring new fire hazards to the forefront and the FCO will run the Summer Fire Safety Campaign through postings on its website to inform the public about keeping fire hazards both specific to the warmer months and those that can occur any time of the year – smoking, cooking, children playing with fire, to name a few. The Summer Fire Safety Campaign materials will be posted on the FCO website in mid-May. Please contact the FCO at firecomm@gov.ab.ca or call (780) 427-8392 for further information.

Bug spray on fire retardant clothing can be hazardous

A safety alert from Enform advises that insect repellent with the ingredient DEET, which is a flammable product, can impact the performance of fire retardant clothing. Laboratory tests on fire retardant (FR) garments saturated with DEET showed a decrease in effectiveness with more after-burn in tests and a 16% increase in second degree burns (from the manikin test). Once the DEET is washed from the fire retardant fabric, the fabric will still have its original FR properties. DEET must not be sprayed directly on clothing and should only be applied to the skin.

Permethrin is an insect repellent designed for fabrics. Also known as Pyrethrum, this product is used on fabrics (tents and clothing) and can be applied to FR clothing. It is non-flammable and in laboratory tests showed no detrimental effect on FR performance. A Permethrin treatment to clothing will remain effective for more than two weeks.

The best protection against insects is to apply DEET to all exposed skin and skin that could be exposed (wrists, ankles, neck) and apply a product containing Permethrin to the clothing being worn. This combination was found to provide 99.9% protection against insect bites in filed tests (less than one bite/hour over an eight hour shift.)

Mark Your Calendar

The Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs will be holding their Annual Conference September 23-26 in Niagara Falls, Ontario. For further information on registration and accommodation, check out their web site at www.cafc.ca

Arson stats at a glance

Defined as the malicious or deliberate damage to property by fire or explosive, arson not only costs millions per year in lost property, it can also cost lives. Here is a brief snapshot of this destructive crime and its impact in Canada.

- Fifty per cent of all arson fires occur outdoors, 30 per cent in structures, and 20 per cent in vehicles.
- Half of all arson arrests are juveniles.
- Statistics Canada reports that 13,315 arson incidents were reported to police in 2005 at a rate of 41 per 100,000 population. The rate was unchanged from 2004, but has decreased 8 per cent since 1995.
- Canada's arson rate of 45 per 100,000 population in 2000 was 41 per cent higher than the American rate.
- Vacant and abandoned buildings are targets for arsonists. Poorer neighbourhoods experience 14 times the number of arson incidents as higher income neighbourhoods.

Information for this article was extracted from The Gazette – Just the Facts column (Vol. 69, Issue 1 2007).

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